

Delaware Museum of Natural History Destructive Sampling Policy

DMNH recognizes the contributions of studies using destructive sampling to many aspects of biology. DMNH also recognizes the potential of destructive sampling to alter valuable specimens and affect their future use in research. This policy has been developed to help us evaluate the potentially competing needs of destructive sampling and more traditional uses of museum specimens. This policy covers all forms of destructive sampling, including samples for genetic research and dissections. DMNH does not maintain a frozen tissue collection.

1. Researchers requesting permission to destructively sample should provide the following information in support of their request:
 - a. A description of the research for which the samples are requested and its potential significance. Justification for the number of samples requested and their importance to the research.
 - b. Description of the efforts made to find appropriate samples from other sources. We feel that destructive sampling of museum specimens should be a last resort.
 - c. Description of the sampling or analysis method to be used (*i.e.* SEM, dissection, feather sample, toe pad clip, *etc.*).
 - d. Evidence that the methods to be used are suitable for the type of sample and the age of the specimen. Requests for genetic resources should include evidence that the proposed methods are appropriate (*e.g.* primers are effective). Preliminary results from other samples of similar age are desirable.
 - e. A description of the facility where the research will take place, evidence of the requestor's affiliation with the institution, and a statement about whether funds have been obtained to allow completion of the research.
2. All requests for destructive sampling will be considered individually. The following criteria will be considered when evaluating the request:
 - a. Scholarly merit of the proposed research, including relation to similar work.
 - b. Availability of the requested material, both at DMNH and at other museums.
 - c. Effects of the proposed sampling on the future usability of the specimen for other research.
 - d. Appropriateness of the proposed methods.
3. If a request for destructive sampling is approved, the recipient agrees to the following:
 - a. Acknowledge DMNH as a source of samples in any publications resulting from the research and provide a copy of the publication (paper or electronic) to DMNH.
 - b. Return any unused portions of the sample to DMNH.
 - c. Provide duplicates of any research products (*e.g.* micrographs, slides, isotope analyses) or a portion of any DNA extracts upon request.
 - d. Use the samples only for the research described in the original request. Samples or their extracts may not be transferred to another researcher without permission. Requests for transfer or use in additional research will be evaluated as for new requests.
 - e. Requestors are responsible for having all applicable permits (CITES, endangered species).
 - f. Sequences obtained from tissues should be entered into GenBank and referenced to the DMNH catalog number following publication of research. The GenBank number should be reported to DMNH for entry into our specimen database.
 - g. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in denial of future loans from DMNH.